

Message Text

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EXDIS FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT KINSHASA 6393 AACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN
BRUSSELS LONDON PARIS JUNE 19

QUOTEC O N I F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6393

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV EAID PEPR CG

SUBJ: DEMARCHE TO MOBUTU ON REFORMS: FRENCH LEAD OFF

REF: KINSHASA 6370

1. SUMMARY: FRENCH AMBASSADOR MADE INITIAL DEMARCHE TO MOBUTU
JUNE 19, PRESENTING TEXT OF MEMORANDUM AGREED TO BY PARIS FIVE.
MOBUTU, WHO WAS COURTEOUS BUT SOMBER, INDICATED AGREEMENT WITH
ALL POINTS MADE BUT DID NOT ELABORATE ON ANY PLANS TO IMPLEMENT
THEM. OTHER PARIS FIVE REPS WILL MAKE THEIR DEMARCHES MORNING
JUNE 20. END SUMMARY.

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2. FRENCH AMB ROSS WAS RECEIVED BY MOBUTU AT NOON JUNE 19.
MEETING WAS PRECEDED BY TELEPHONE CALL TO MOBUTU FROM PRES
GISCARD WHO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED TO THE DEMARCHES
ABOUT TO BE MADE. ACCORDING TO ROSS, IT WAS THIS CALL THAT INDUCED
MOBUTU TO DELAY PLANS TO TRAVEL TO SHABA LONG ENOUGH TO RECEIVE
THE PARIS FIVE REPS.

3. ROSS IMMEDIATELY GAVE MOBUTU AGREED TEXT OF MEMORANDUM, WHICH MOBUTU READ CAREFULLY FROM BEGINNING TO END IN "COURTEOUS BUT SOMBER MOOD". IN DISCUSSION THAT FOLLOWED, ROSS STRESSED NEED FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA AND RECONCILIATION BETWEEN CENTRAL GOVT AND SHABANS. ON ANGOLA, MOBUTU SAID THERE WAS NOBODY MORE WILLING THAN HE TO REACH AN UNDERSTANDING WITH NETO; BUT IT TAKES TWO TO REACH SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING, AND MOBUTU'S OVERTURES STARTING IN JAN 1977 (WHEN HE UNILATERALLY RECOGNIZED THE LUANDA REGIME) HAD NOT BEEN RECIPROCATED. ROSS SUGGESTED SOMETHING MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED NOW "IN A NEW FRAMEWORK". AS FOR MEDIATION, MOBUTU RECALLED HE HAD TRIED NIGERIA AND CONGO, AND NOW KAUNDA HAD OFFERED TO HELP. MOBUTU SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE IN KAUNDA DESPITE THE KATANGANS HAVING USED ZAMBIAN TERRITORY TO ATTACK ZAIRE, BUT THAT HE WAS SKEPTICAL THAT WHATEVER EFFORTS KAUNDA MIGHT MAKE WOULD BE EFFECTIVE.

4. ON NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, ROSS RECALLED THAT WHEN HE TOOK POWER IN 1965 MOBUTU GAINED SUPPORT AS A MEDIATOR AMONG ZAIRE'S DIFFERING TRIBES. FRANCE HOPED THAT, TODAY, MOBUTU COULD ADOPT AN ATTITUDE OF CLEMENCY IN DEALING WITH THE LUNDA AND SHABA'S OTHER TRIBAL POPULATIONS, AND OF SYMPATHY TOWARD CERTAIN ONES OF THEM (E.G., NGUZA). SUCH A POLICY OF RECONCILIATION WOULD YIELD POLITICAL BENEFITS, BOTH INTERNALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY. MOBUTU AGREED, AND SAID HE HAD ALREADY GIVEN ORDERS (PRESUMABLY TO FAZ) IN THAT VEIN. ROSS STRESSED THAT ORDERS WERE ONE THING, BUT THEIR ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION WAS YET ANOTHER. MOBUTU DID NOT RESPOND.
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5. ROSS REVIEWED BRIEFLY THE ECONOMIC POINTS, MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY AS AGREED THE NECESSITY OF QUICKLY PLACING FOREIGN EXPERTS IN KEY FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND ESTABLISHING FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROLS. MOBUTU CONFIRMED THAT HE APPROVED THESE AND ALL OTHER REFORMS MENTIONED BY GOZ DELEGATION IN BRUSSELS.

6. IN CONCLUSION, MOBUTU, SAID HE WAS "IN TOTAL AGREEMENT" WITH POINTS RAISED IN PARIS FIVE'S MEMORANDUM, NOTING THAT MOST OF THOSE POINTS WERE ONES ON WHICH HE HIMSELF HAD INITIATED ACTION IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS REFORM PROGRAMS. DESPITE ALL HIS PRESENT DIFFICULTIES, MOBUTU SAID, HE COULD NOT DECEIVE HIS FRIENDS.

7. COMMENT: AS ANTICIPATED, THE FRENCH DEMARCHE WAS MADE IN TERMS THAT WERE QUITE GENERAL AND PROBABLY GENTLE AS WELL. ROSS APPARENTLY DID NOT GET INTO ANY OF THE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING INTERNAL POLITICAL REFORMS. NOR DID HE RAISE THE QUESTION OF IMPROVING THE ARMY, EXPLAINING THAT HE HAD DONE SO ON SEVERAL PREVIOUS OCCASIONS. BUT AT LEAST THE BALL HAS BEEN SET IN MOTION, AND IN SUCH A WAY AS NOT TO TURN MOBUTU OFF WITH RESPECT TO GOING THROUGH WITH THE REST OF THE DEMARCHES. I WILL MAKE MY PITCH EARLY MORNING JUNE 20, FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY THE BRITISH,

BELGIAN AND GERMAN.
CUTLER. UNQUOTE VANCE

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